

Replying to Senator Thomas.
Editor of The Times-Dispatch:
Sir.—I am glad to welcome Senator A. F. Thomas into our discussion on the second-day primary. I only wish more of our thoughtful citizens who have the good of the Democratic party at heart would join in this debate. For since the abolition of a convention the columns of a newspaper offer the only means for an exchange of views upon any public question between the separated members of our party.

Thomas agrees with The Times-Discpatch and me that in a convention is the only way the party can perform those executive party functions so necessary to its life. To my mind "the promulgation of party policies and the

There seems to be some great fear on the part of Senator Thomas that the majority of the delegates in a convention would not voice the will of a majority of the people. This fear is

unfounded, or else our form of government is a confessed failure. Ours is a representative form of government and the convention is a representative form of party organization.

Under the plan suggested, the people vote in the primary for delegates to the convention who are to represent them in party affairs just as they vote

in an election for officers who are to represent them in governmental affairs, at the same time expressing their will in the selection of candidates. If a majority select a candidate that settles the matter, but if not then the delegates, acting under the instructions of their principals, voice

My friend Thomas is entirely mis-
taken in assuming that the plan pro-
posed takes away any part of the
powers of the people in the choice of
candidates, or that the good features
of the primary are in any way in-
fringed. All that is asked is to ad-

to the primary the good features of the convention—those three-fourths of the party's functions which admittedly are so needful to its existence—is such a way that "the conclusiveness of the one and the harmony flowing from the other can both be secured."

Given the first-day primary in which no candidate receives a majority, the issue is: Shall the party declare as its nominee the candidate securing a plurality of votes, as now shall it hold a second-day primary in which only the two highest candidates enter, or shall it hold a convention

composed of delegates elected in the primary by the people, who shall have power to vote at will only the strength of the dropped candidate, and who shall perform all those other three-fourths of the party's functions so essential to its existence, which now go unperformed?

First, Under the primary system we do not have any party organization by which to elect the nominees. No means are provided by it for the perpetuation of the party—no system is

Second. The cost of a one-day primary bars all but the well-to-do from office; a second-day primary will nearly double the cost to candidates, and allow only the very rich to aspire to office.

Third. If there are more than three candidates for one office, to allow only the highest two to enter the second-day primary is extremely unfair to the middle man or men, as a fraction of the lowest man's vote might put him or them ahead of the leaders.

Fourth. It is unjust to the party, its

there be three or more candidates and a sharply drawn issue in which two of the candidates take opposite and extreme views, and the other takes the middle ground, it is not only possible but probable, that the second-day primary would be confined to the two extremists (because that being the "paramount" issue, the people would

line up on one or the other side of (t) and that the final nominee would be chosen against the wishes of two-thirds, or three-fourths of the party—according to the number of candidates—as heretofore shown.

Fifth, In the second-day primary plan, three-fourths of the party's

Sixth. In the absence of a convention the self-appointed candidates

make their own platforms, though nominally Democrats, and can thus bind the party to any sort of fool position that seems to them to have a momentary popularity, and upon which they hope to ride into office. If nominated by a bare plurality they expect all who call themselves Demo-

Seventh. In the absence of a convention and under the primary system which allows any one to become a self-appointed candidate, the party, whose support is so safely relied upon for election, has absolutely no voice in the choice of candidates—the party cannot

Eighth. The nominee of a party is presented to the world as a leader of the party who stands for the principles and policies of that party. It would seem that the party should have some voice in the selection of its lead-

Ninth. The primary tends to break up the party into factions; the convention to heal its wounds and to solidify it. The combination plan pro-

Tenth. If the people can be trusted to vote for their State officers to whom they delegate all of the powers of a great government, it would seem that

they can be trusted to vote in a primary for delegates to a party convention to whom they delegate only limited powers for the performance of party functions alone. To deny this is to deny the power of self-government under a representative form of government.

Strode and others who have, at one time or another, introduced pet primary bills in the Legislature, to point out the weaknesses in the above positions and to show us what good to the party and to the State can be secured by a second-day primary. In which only the two leading candidates are al-

loved to enter.
ROBERT W. WITHERS.
 Suffolk, Va., July 14, 1908.

Just an Experiment.
 A restaurateur asked me the other day what he could do to increase the patronage of his house, where several

are fifty-six small tables for two, braced against the walls of the place. Scattered here and there are tables for four, six and eight; some round, some square, some rectangular. "Pull every small table away from the wall," I said, "so that a chair will go behind it. One of the little sanctities of man-

is to have his back against something so that nobody can walk behind him. Cut the tables down to solitaires and you can place 100 where only fifty-six are now. Every customer that comes in alone will have a table to himself with the privilege of facing the throng, the waiter, the manager and the proprietor." Strangely enough the ad-

vice was taken. Result: An increase of 200 per cent. in business and always a grand rush for the solitaires.—"Tip" in New York Press.